the main axis [51] of the village. This door is always placed rather high and closes on an inner slide. Since nse-nse and ndele are lacking in this region, the framework of the huts is made of stakes and pieces of raffia, and the walls and roof are covered with raffia leaves plaited flat in the form of a mat.

The huts are built singly, a method which again reminds one of the customs of the Oshwe-Bumbuli region. The native does sometimes cover his hut with grass, but this is very rare.

In this region we also observed that in certain villages the huts were arranged in family groupings and that each group had a special area clearly set apart from the rest of the village. The various huts of a single group are inside a fairly solid stake fence from one and three-quarters to two meters high and sometimes covered with mats of raffia leaves. The doors of all the huts within an enclosure open toward the interior of the courtyard.

Fig. 35. Interior of a Lupango and Drying Peanuts, Bena Dibele-Kole Region.

The whole forms the lupango. By counting the number of huts in a lupango one may determine how many wives the chief or head of the place has, since each one has her own home. [52] The lupango are of recent introduction and are derived from Arab influence. One cannot take them into account in establishing relationships of kinship or ethnic affinity between the different peoples. There is no connection whatever between the lupango of the Bena Dibele-Kole region and the familial grouping of huts

595^ 554 On the day set aside for establishing the position of the bolɑ́mbɑ́, there is a great feast. All the clans and neighboring villages that have been invited gather at the home of the polygamist in question. He presents the woman to them and addresses the gathering: "Here is the woman whom I want to make my bolɑ́mbɑ́, as I have already announced to you. Today I am making public the decision I already made a long time ago. Be it known to all that no man may touch her, or he will be severely punished." Then two women (in rare instances, two men) hold the woman, and the husband unfastens her belt and rips off all her clothing. Then the assistants tie a rope or a belt of mpangɑ́ (striped antelope) skin around her, and to it they attach various furs. From that day [292] until her death she may no longer wear the clothing (bitɔ́o) of other women; she must always [350] be dressed in furs. Hence her name, bolɑ́mbɑ́ wa bikɔ́tɔ́, "bolɑ́mbɑ́ with furs." Then her husband gives her pots of palm oil with which she will have to cover herself. Two men approach her; they are chosen among the handsomest in the village (1) (married or single) and are

[609] 1. They are then (sic) relatives of the husband. Nkundɔ́ law dictates that no stranger shall perform a function of the slightest importance -- not even that of silencing a gathering. According to their saying, bofaya ɑ́fɔ́tɛ́le lokɑ́anga, "a stranger does not cut up a guinea hen."

[301] richly adorned with furs, belts of mpangɑ́, beads, raffia fabrics with jagged edges, copper rings on their ankles, etc. Stepping in rhythm, they lead her to the house intended for her which is [351] [524] surrounded by a fence of bofeko posts (Ricinodendron africanum) held together with palms. This hut with its fence is called ilɛke.

There the bolɑ́mbɑ́ will reside for months and years (up to three or more, they say). She is secluded there, so to speak, [514] and may not go out. If she needs to go to the banana groves for her personal needs, she covers and surrounds herself with a mat so that no one will see her.

Now the mulemba leave the village.

624 *Okala*, a young woman of their own number, who will thereafter be known by this
[533] name. She is an official cymbalist and must always begin beating before others may join in. In reality the members of the *mulemba* have decided beforehand who shall be chosen for this position, and the woman of their choice now takes her stand on the elevation together with *Nkumu Akala* and his wife, *Nsumu*.

624 The member of the *mulemba* whose right it is by inheritance to place the *mantsia*
382 (see Plates) upon the head of the *nkumu* now comes forward with it. This hat, about twelve inches in height, is woven of raffia and cylindrical in shape, but the brim, instead of being at the base, encircles the top of the crown. It is usually decorated with a burnished brass plate attached to the front, and perhaps a second one behind, and in these modern days it is quite in style to hang a row of safety pins from the 'brim' or 'halo' encircling the crown. When the *nkumu* is the first of his line, the *mantsia* is purchased by him, but in the case of succession it is that used by the deceased predecessor, and has been kept by the *mulemba* until this time. It is his badge of office and sign of authority. The bringing out of the *mantsia* is an occasion for
624 merriment. *Nkumu Akala* calls for his *mantsia*, but the *mulemba* tease and tantalize him and ask for money. The amount is a fixed sum, but *Nkumu Akala* pays out at first but a few rods, is teased for more, and so on until he has provided the total amount, usually about one hundred. The member of the *mulemba* whose duty it is to place the *mantsia* on the head of the *nkumu* begins to tease the crowd. He chooses various names by which the *nkumu* might be called, everybody knowing all the time what his name must be. He asks the people, 'Shall we call him so-and-so?' 'We refuse', reply the people. 'Or so-and-so?' 'We refuse.' And each time names whereby *nkumu* are known are repeated. Finally the correct name is given, as, 'Shall we call him *Nkumu Lokumbola*?' and the crowd roars its approval, 'Ooooo!' The *mantsia* then being placed on *Nkumu Akala*'s head he now becomes *Nkumu* and leaps down among the crowd, who bear him off to their village with rejoicing. In the choice of names, the first *nkumu* in a village is known as *Nkumu Lokumbola*. If there is another section of the village with an *nkumu* of its own, he must take another name, such as *Nkumu Iyali Bokonga*. Successors must always take the names of their predecessors whatever their own personal names may be. An *nkumu* chosen by a *mulemba*
[554] which is also the *nsumu mokonda*, the hereditary owner of the land, is known as *Nkumu e Bitindi* (*Nkumu* of the heels), for he occupies a more important position than his fellows, and is thus the support which holds up the whole group of *nkumu* chosen by other *mulemba*.

624 The *nkumu* is borne off to his *nsuge*, his residence, which in this case is temporary,
342 to be replaced later by a permanent one. The *nsuge* comprises the whole unit of buildings for the *nkumu*, including his own sleeping quarters, the houses for his wives, the *ekunga* where he spends the daylight hours, and a row of houses for his children. His *ekunga* and his own sleeping quarters are screened from the public gaze, making a place known as *ifuma*. In the case of a new *nkumu* the screen is temporary, but
● [351] when the permanent *nsuge* is built, a permanent *ifuma* is made by planting umbrella trees (*mulemba*, sing. *mulemba*) in a rectangular or circular fashion. Here, sheltered
624 from intrusion, the *nkumu* remains in retirement (*nsali*) for a month.[1] While he remains

[1] *Nsali* refers to the sitting of a hen on eggs, *nkumu* at this juncture of the ceremonies, the seclusion of a woman after childbirth, or of the